

Abstract

The invention relates to a device that is used for the automatic release, without any manual effort, of the steering system in a motor vehicle comprising electric power steering and a locking mechanism which acts on the steering column or on another part of the steering system. Control means, which are connected to the electric assist motor, receive signals from at least one vehicle status and/or initiating event detector and control the motor in order to rotate the steering column or move another part of the steering system until the torque or stress on the locking mechanism is cancelled or reduced to almost zero, thereby enabling said mechanism to be released. The control of the motor is automatically interrupted at the end of a pre-determined period of time if the mechanism has not been released.